PRACTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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PRACTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Editorial Remarks

We'd like to share with you a few of our hopes and expectations for the future of Practical Anthropology. Under the present modest scale of operations we will not be able to expand rapidly. However, this is only the seventh issue, and we have definite ideas as to what we want this journal to become in the near future. We hope that you will stick with us and offer your own suggestions--either directly to the editor or to a member of the Editorial Committee. Aside from the little improvements we hope to make in the appearance, we plan to maintain the features we have begun already. We'd like to review with you what we hope to see accomplished in some of these departments.

There will, of course, be at least one article in each issue, and we hope it will not be too long before there are two. We expect that some of these articles will be theoretically oriented and others practically oriented. Both are important. One of our major purposes is to work toward the development of a Christian anthropology. It obviously will be necessary for some of us to make suggestions concerning possible implications and applications of anthropology in a Christian framework. Theoretical papers embodying propositions which can be discussed, developed and tested are essential to the above stated goal. The practically oriented articles may be in some cases field reports on some experiment or observed situation which demonstrates a truth or an application of anthropology. The danger is, of course, that there will be a shortage of practical articles. A glance at those published so far reveals that the theoretical statements already outnumber the practical studies. Perhaps it will have to be this way until more of us have had opportunity to apply anthropology and report on the results. For example, we had one article suggesting ways in which a minister could use anthropology. In all probability few of us have tried to work out a careful application of anthropology in ministerial work, but we hope that some are and that reports on the results will be available

before too long. If you are in a position to test any of the suggestions made in our articles please do so with the purpose of reporting to us on the outcome. It should be easiest to get practical reports in the field of missionary anthropology, for a number of you with anthropological training are using it now. A supreme example of this type of report is the paper by Mrs. Reyburn in the November issue. We will hear from Mrs. Reyburn again, but we expect to publish similarly practical articles on other phases of missions.

On what subjects do we need articles? There should be some which will help the minister understand his people and work with them more effectively. There should be articles which contribute to the Christian worker's understanding of today's culture so as to aid him in contacting people for Christ. There should be articles which will help a Christian comprehend more accurately his own beliefs and behaviors as well as those of other Christians so that he may determine more accurately just where and how he is to "separate" himself from the culture of the world. There should be articles to aid the missionary in the acquisition and employment of concepts and techniques to make him a better missionary. Articles on the conflict between certain scientific doctrines and Christian beliefs where these come within the scope of anthropology should prove helpful to some.

The following topics, most of them quite broad, will provide some idea of areas in which articles are needed. The papers themselves may be more limited in scope. 1) anthropology and the minister, 2) anthropological field techniques for the missionary, 3) culture as a tool for understanding the native personality, 4) the relationship between the working of the Holy Spirit and the regularities of human behavior, 5) the degree to which the missionary should try to direct cultural change, 6) anthropological training for missionaries, 7) educational problems on the mission field, 8) anthropology as an aid in setting up an effective missionary education program in the local church, 9) using the culture concept to apply Scriptural principles

in today's culture, 10) the relationship between cultural change and spiritual change in the individual, 11) the culture concept as an aid to interpreting Scripture, 12) the problem of Christian "separation" from nonChristian culture in relation to Christian social action, 13) Christian interpretation of man's cultural history as revealed by archaeology, 14) Christian interpretation of man's biological history as seen in human palaeontology, 15) the origin and dispersion of races, 16) interracial relations and Christian attitudes, 17) limitations and applications of cultural relativism for Christians, 18) presentation of the salvation message in terms of the indigenous culture, 19) evaluation of current trends in Western culture (including secular applied anthropology) in relation to their possible influence on Christian evangelism and social action.

It should be understood that those who contribute need not be professional anthropologists--otherwise we would get very few articles. Quite a number of the some 145 subscribers to Practical Anthropology have studied and applied anthropology and are in a position to make valuable contributions.

A number of you have requested that we publish book reviews. We will try to evaluate some of the best books on anthropological subjects in terms of their usefulness to Christians and their implications for Christian thought and action.

The correspondence section has been included in only one issue so far. This is because only two of you have written letters specifically for publication. We believe, however, that this department should be one of the most valuable in the periodical. Some of you may not wish to write an article, but you can report on some incident or make some observation which will help us in making anthropology more valuable for Christian work and for the development of a Christian anthropology. In the preceding issue James Hatch calls for an integration of the laws of the Spirit with the laws of anthropology. This is a big order, and we do not expect to see very soon an article from one

of you giving a comprehensive outline of such an integration. But we do suspect quite strongly that some of you have one or more specific suggestions to make along these lines. If you have we must hear from you. Maybe the idea is not too well formed, but share it with us anyway, for it is on such specific suggestions that we must build. Someday we may reach the place where we can formulate just such an integration between anthropological and supernatural laws by drawing in large part on suggestions made in this periodical. The Discussion and Correspondence section is the place where we can exchange ideas and observations for the benefit of all. We believe that this department should be second in importance only to the articles. Perhaps it will prove to be more important.

The last department, the notes and news section, should help anthropologically oriented Christians keep informed of one another's activities and movements, and provide bits of information which may be of use or of interest. If you have such news be sure to send it in.

THE NEED FOR ANTHROPOLOGICALLY TRAINED MISSIONARIES

George R. Horner

In the introduction to his now classic work, Initiation des Missions en Colonie Francaise, Maurice Lenhardt, himself a missionary-ethnologist with the Paris mission in New Caledonia for over forty years, wrote the following words: "The experience of Pentecost renews itself in each apostolic vocation. A missionary, called to the evangelization of a people, thinks of this people in a universal sense, that it is one of a group of souls. The other aspects, which are ethnic, social, political, appear to the missionary as almost accidental, a peculiarity of the domain of things which pass."[1]

It is to recall the attention of the missionary to the importance of the things which are "ethnic social and political" that this paper has been written.

The great social and racial problems which are constantly erupting in many parts of Africa causing horrible fractures and leaving unhealed scars across the web of human relationships can be traced in large part to church and mission policies which did not take into consideration things "ethnic, social or political." Even to this day the Mormons do no missionary work in Africa because they believe the Africans do not have souls! The Kikuyu of Kenya, from whom the Mau Mau have sprung, were Christianized one hundred years ago by a British society. Just recently a missionary told the author that the only way to solve the Mau Mau problem was in gradual extermination of that tribe of five million people! One needn't be reminded that the South African Dutch Church with Malanism is an unfortunate by-product of ignorant Calvinism.

Most mission societies went to Africa and other parts of the world to bring "good" and salvation's message to peoples who were steeped in "ignorance and sin", but, with few exceptions, the actual results have been quite different. Although it was easy to say why we were going to

Africa and other parts of the world, no one could say what the results would be. None could forecast, for example, that immorality would increase; none could say that missions would be considered imperialistic by the Africans. What is more important, none were able to discern, nor did anyone try, the Africans' reasons for accepting missions and Christianity. In some areas Christianity became not the vehicle of salvation, but the means of achieving prestige and other cultural and social goals much faster. To this day girls in most parts of Africa go to school not to be educated, or westernized, or to practice a more effective Christianity, but they go for the simple purpose of gaining higher social status and bringing a higher dowry. This is obviously quite opposite to the reasons in the minds of the missionaries.

These general factors indicate that missionaries need an anthropological education. They need such preparation not only for comprehending such broad situations but also for more satisfactory day to day relationships. One day a missionary neighbor came to us in an agitated state. She was worried about what she called the "carrying on" of her three African helpers, two boys and a girl. She was sure that immoral acts would result from their "fooling around" as she put it. Had she even as little as a few months training in the "things which are social" she would have realized that these three young people, coming from the same village, were "brothers" and "sister" to one another, even though each had different biological parents. The social fact that each stood in this relationship would have indicated that no immoral acts could result from their "kidding", for "brothers" and "sisters" of the same village (extended family) are forbidden any immoral relationships. These relationships are controlled just as carefully and certainly as those between biological brothers and sisters in Western society.

I am concerned with the lack of even general education in anthropology on the part of most missionaries. For so many the term, anthropology, has an evolutionary connotation, and they will have no more to do with it. In a

superficial survey conducted by the author in one mission only one out of 110 people had a degree in anthropology; five had one course in anthropology; two had had some linguistics; and no one had taken any kind of course concerned with their area of Africa excepting one hour of "panel discussion" conducted by a former missionary. With the exception of the two main tribes in the mission's area of operations no one could name any of the sixty phratries or tribes in the same area. And yet every missionary felt that he was equipped to work with the people, and the majority felt no need for further work or study to do a better job as a missionary.

Missionary training in most Christian colleges, theological seminaries, Bible institutes or missionary training schools has changed little over the years. More attention seems to be given to the construction of a Greek verb than to the teaching of a native language. "Christian" education is studied to the neglect of the patterns and goals of native educational systems. The "goodness" of our marriage system is emphasized without understanding the weaknesses of our marriage system and noting the "good" in a native system. As a matter of fact a knowledge of native marriage customs would not have permitted so much waste of time in an effort to stamp out the native system and replace it with the western pattern, which is equally questionable. Immorality, as we have it today, did not creep into African and other indigenous social systems until another system was imported and the old tribal laws of morality were destroyed. Educated Africans ask the missionaries about their marriage customs, and when they learn that a white man can marry a girl from his home town or that he can marry a third cousin they exclaim, "And you talk to me about committing sin!" Had we, in the past, through anthropological knowledge, equated the best in the African and native social and cultural systems with the best in Christianity there probably would not have been the great feeling of suspicion and hatred toward the white man and Christianity which is so apparent in many parts of Africa today.

One or two anthropology courses will not eliminate all

of the prejudices in our minds toward those of another culture. Nor is it just a matter of faith and prayer. But one or two courses plus faith and prayer will go a long way. Anthropology courses for missionaries should be planned so as to impart insight and sensitivity to the student before he goes to the field. A student must break through the barriers of not only his own prejudices but the incorporated prejudices (called traditions) which, through the years, have become a part of the mythology of almost every missionary. A simple statement to a new, innocent, ignorant missionary such as "Our people are so child-like" can establish a permanent barrier against any effective Christian relationship between missionary and native. Perhaps we should consider more carefully the implications of the Africans' observation, "All missionaries are nice when they are new". This attitude toward the newly arrived missionary, which is an outgrowth of the Africans' previous experience with missionaries, is one of the earliest barriers to his work.

One more example of prejudice will suffice. We might think that the African woman is "a beast of burden", but does that make it so? Employing the same degree of ignorance an African woman often thinks of the missionary lady as "worthless" and "lazy" because she doesn't do the same kind of manual labor she does. But does this make it true? A six months (or more) study of the position of women in African society from a scientific anthropological point of view might bring into perspective the true relationships and attitudes involved. In some African societies women have more freedom than the girl or woman who is reading these words. This kind of misunderstanding between native and missionary is not uncommon.

The point is, of course, that the more training one has the fewer mistakes he will make on the field. The missionary should have a basic course in general anthropology, a course in social organizations, and an area course in the field of his mission. The latter should be exhaustive and should be taken <u>before</u> going on the field, and at the first furlough time opportunity should be taken for further study.

This will meet the minimum requirements for applying anthropological principles to mission problems as well as providing the missionary with basic knowledge without majoring in anthropology. It is preferable, of course, to take other courses including primitive religion, social anthropology, psychology and culture, cultural dynamics, culture contact, urbanization, economics, etc. as the interest arises. These studies would have an influence on matters such as mission policy and yearly "emphasis" programs. If such anthropologically oriented programs were put into effect the native peoples would respond favorably, and they would say, "Now you are beginning to understand us". This would contribute to the binding quality of the Christian relationship, the goal in any Christian program.

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NOTES

1. Translated by George R. Horner

BOOK REVIEW

Innovation: The Basis of Cultural Change by H. G. Barnett. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953, 462 pages, $6.00.

In the opinion of the reviewer this study of cultural change is a significant stride in the development of one of the most important branches of cultural anthropology. However that may be, I am convinced that Dr. Barnett's keen analysis is worthy of the serious attention of Christians who wish to understand the basic factors behind the upheavals which plague so many of the nonwestern societies of the world among whom the missionary is working.

Too many missionaries are unaware of the importance of the subject of cultural dynamics. Enlightened workers frequently state that it is valuable to become familiar with the "customs" of the people. That certainly is a first all-important step, but it is far from enough. The missionary must get away from the tendency to regard cultures as static ways of life. It is an elementary principle of anthropology that cultures constantly change, but headway in understanding the conditions, causes and processes of change has been slow. In a world characterized by rapid change the Christian worker needs to understand what is happening, and with the missionary's opportunity for on-the-spot observation of cultural changes he can make valuable contributions to the further development of this significant branch of cultural anthropology.

This work may be used profitably in two ways. It may be either read or studied, depending on the background, time, and purpose of the reader. Even a superficial reading will awaken the Christian worker to many things he needs to know. Dr. Barnett is a keen observer and illustrates his points effectively with material drawn from his field experience among the Palauans of Micronesia and several American Indian groups and from American life. Enough can be learned from his observations on what has happened in these societies to make reading the book worth while. Nor does he neglect the missionary effort. The following statement

is, perhaps, particularly significant, and is typical of his insight:

> The concatenation of causes and effects that are initiated by schoolroom indoctrination not infrequently leaves its well-meaning initiator aghast and uncomprehending of the part he has played in the ultimate results. Missionary teachers, concentrating upon the impressionable minds of the children of an alien group, seek to implant the divergent values of their own world view while ignoring or belittling those of the group they are intent upon enlightening. Implicitly or explicitly they give their pupils to understand that the ideas of their parents are misguided, naive, evil, or dangerous. Very few of them in the past have foreseen the far-reaching consequences of such instruction. Few have been prepared to face the fact that teaching a child that his father's ideas are foolish leads to a bankruptcy of parental discipline and to an irreparable rift between the two generations; and that these breaches lead to severe emotional disturbances which manifest themselves in the violence, irresponsibility, and aimless despair of bereft and insecure people. This sequence of events has occurred with the regularity of a natural law in all parts of the world where systematic education has aimed at the weaning away of children from the idea systems of their elders. And this has been the favored approach, endorsed as it is by the common-sense realization that adults make discouraging pupils, especially when their prejudices are assailed.[1]

A fresh and enlightening view is taken of many aspects of change. Barnett's evaluation of the role of prestige in securing the acceptance of new ideas, Christian or otherwise, is a case in point. His conclusion is that:

> In dealing with alien peoples whom they want to influence, missionaries, traders, and administrators usually make contact with priests, kings, and aristocrats, hoping to secure the cooperation of these powerful men in gaining popular acceptance of their goals. They

> attempt to play upon the prestige of local leaders even though they themselves might be in a position to bring force to bear upon the populace. The theory is good, and sometimes it works. Seldom does it work perfectly, however, for it is premised upon the faulty generalization that prestige is the exclusive property of the elite and is coextensive with authority.[2]
>
> ....Radical departures, those which exceed the bound of expectability for their originators, must be advocated at the risk of prestige loss.
>
> Over against every instance of a radical change that has been carried solely by the prestige of its advocate there could be set several others that have resulted in prestige collapse....King Edward VIII of Great Britain and King Leopold of Belgium were forced into exile partly because their subjects, or an effective nucleus of them, refused to accept their determination to marry commoners.[3]

The missionary may learn from this to be careful about resting too heavily on the prestige factor to secure converts whether it be his own prestige or that of a village headman or tribal chief. By subsequent discussions he may be prompted to pay more careful attention to some other factors which are far more important than prestige in securing acceptance of a new idea.

Perhaps these two examples will provide an idea of the kind of insight which may be acquired from the book. The author's observations from areas other than missions embody many principles which are just as applicable to evangelism, Christian social action and missions.

While many valuable lessons may be learned by simply reading the book, it requires study to receive greatest benefit. It is admittedly heavy in places, delving into psychological and philosophical principles and concepts. The serious reader who succeeds in getting at least most of Dr. Barnett's basic scheme will be rewarded by a deeper

understanding of the illustrative material as well as a fund of principles that he can apply in understanding the common daily situations of change and the prediction of their outcome.

Dr. Barnett combines a social psychological approach with a cultural approach to cultural change. The same basic scheme is applied to interpret change within a culture as that which results from culture contact, for he regards them as being basically the same in process. The process is a psychological event by which individuals either think of new ideas (innovations) or accept or reject customs practiced or advocated by others. An individual, through a psychological process whose course is described in some detail, combines ideas which he already has in mind and which have never been combined in that way in his mind before. Inasmuch as it is a new combination of ideas it is called an innovation. Once the idea is in existence other individuals, either of the innovator's own culture or from another culture, have opportunity to accept or reject it. If enough members of the innovator's society accept the new idea it becomes a part of the culture (a custom) and an internal cultural change has occurred. If the acceptors are of a different culture external cultural change, diffusion or acculturation, has occurred. Inasmuch as this summary of Barnett's thesis is oversimplified it is distorted, but it is hoped that it gives some idea of his approach.

Innovation is divided into four main parts. Part One: The Setting deals at length with the cultural situations which give rise to change. Barnett is not of the school of thought which regards culture as an entity which can be completely understood in its own terms without reference to individuals and their psychological makeup. He makes extensive and enlightening use of the culture concept, as one might expect of a cultural anthropologist, but in the introduction to the book he states that:

> ....In dealing with culture we are inevitably dealing with multi-individual ideas, that is, ideas shared by

> more than one person. But this sharing does not take the ideas into a new plane. It does not make them supraindividual with an autonomy of their own....They do not act with forces and features of their own,...
>
> The argument for a sociopsychological view of culture applies with special force to the problem of change. No matter how this problem is viewed, it takes on an ultimate mental reference....[4]

Yet he emphasizes that the cultural setting must be taken into account to understand change. Mental processes do not operate in a vacuum. Before innovation can proceed there must be available a fund of pre-existing ideas, and these are provided by the inventory of cultural traits (customs) to which the innovator has been exposed. Other factors having to do with the orientations of the culture such as whether there is collaboration of effort for change, whether or not there is opportunity for concentration of many ideas in the mind of an individual, whether or not change is expected, functional linages between customs, etc. are taken into account in trying to understand why a change has occurred or is likely to occur. From this section a missionary can formulate a scheme by which he may analyze the changes occurring in the culture in which he is working. He may be able to find reasons why his people so strongly resist the idea of salvation through Christ, if that be the case.

Part Two: The Incentives to Innovation involves a classification and analysis of the factors which motivate the individual to innovate new things. It deals with the human factor as the source of culture, factors which operate to varying degrees and in different situations in every normal human regardless of culture or race. The psychologist should find this section of interest. As a nonChristian anthropologist Barnett makes no mention of the possibility of supernatural agency in motivation.

That which actually happens in the mind of the individual who responds to the urge to innovate is described in

Part Three: Innovative Processes. The first two parts of the book deal with conditions and causes, but this section deals with the dynamic processes, which are mental. The fundamental idea is that every innovator identifies similar parts of two configurations of ideas and substitutes one part for the other, thus constructing a new combination of ideas, which is the innovation. For example, the individual may observe an automobile with solid rubber tires and a bicycle with pneumatic tires. He detects the similarity between pneumatic tires and solid rubber tires and substitutes the former for the latter in the automobile-solid rubber tires configuration. The new idea is the automobile-pneumatic tires configuration. It is an innovation which, if it becomes shared, will be a part of culture.

This is, no doubt, the most difficult part of the book. Perhaps it is the only part which may provide extensive opportunity for head scratching depending on the intellectual background and endowment of the reader. Diagrams and symbols are used to help understand the basic processes, compounded processes and their ramifications. Though heavy, this material is valuable in understanding what happens in culture contact, for the processes are basically the same.

In Part Four: Acceptance and Rejection, Barnett deals with the fate of innovations and the results of culture contact. The problem, of course, is why things are accepted or rejected. The clarification of this matter provides a basis for predicting with a high degree of probability what people will accept and what they will reject. Three sets of factors are considered: the characteristics of the sponsors of a new custom, the characteristics of the advocated customs themselves, and the characteristics of the potential acceptors.

This material is of extreme significance to the missionary, for he is seeking to get nonchristian peoples to accept ideas which may be alien to them, the idea of God's love, the idea of a Redeemer, the idea of sin, or the idea of heaven. More than that the missionary may advocate the use of hospitals and other medical services, Sunday church

services, major key music, trousers, soap and many other things. All of this comes under the purview of cultural change, and the lack of appreciation of these things on the part of missionaries contributes heavily to the failure of much missionary effort today and in the past. I am convinced that a thorough and applied understanding of the nature of cultural change such as can be obtained by studying this book, accompanied by prayer and submission to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will contribute to a great degree to wiping out much of the present waste of God's time and money in the missionary program. Of course, the individual with a background in social science will get more from the book than one without it, but, as we observed before, there is much to be gained from reading it without a concentrated attempt to understand the more difficult parts.

Robert B. Taylor

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NOTES

1. P. 94. 2. P. 314. 3. P. 319. 4. P. 15.

NOTES AND NEWS

Buswell Takes Over Anthropology Work At Wheaton

Beginning September, 1954 James O. Buswell, III will assume his duties as anthropology teacher at Wheaton College. Mr. Buswell has done graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University and has been teaching anthropology at Shelton College for the last several years. He succeeds Robert B. Taylor, who is to resume work on a doctorate in anthropology at the University of Oregon.

Horner Engaged in Research at Boston University

Dr. George R. Horner, who worked for several years as missionary anthropologist with the Presbyterian U. S. A. board in Camerouns, was appointed recently as Assistant Professor and Research Associate in the African Research and Studies Program at Boston University. He will be teaching part time, and the rest of his work will be research and writing.

The program is a study and research program for all of Africa represented by area specialists who direct the work in their area. Dr. Horner's area is French West Africa. Though several courses on Africa are offered no higher degree is available. Members of the staff work with students who are writing theses on Africa under the sponsorship of other departments.

Northwest Nazarene College Offers Anthropology Course

A course in cultural anthropology will be offered at Northwest Nazarene College at Nampa, Idaho in the second semester of 1954-55. The course will be handled by G. E. Sharp of the Department of Sociology.

Anthropology Programs in the Los Angeles Area

There are three universities in the Los Angeles area which offer good courses in anthropology. The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) has a fairly young but

energetic department offering approximately thirty undergraduate and ten graduate courses covering all areas of anthropology well and with no apparent specialty or bias. Of interest to prospective missionaries are courses in acculturation, applied anthropology, culture and personality, primitive religion, linguistics, and area ethnology studies.

The program compares favorably with that of the older University of California department at Berkeley, having seven full-time professors. A thesis is not required for the M. A. degree, but for graduate students who transfer to UCLA it usually takes two full years.

For the student wishing merely to supplement his Bible school or seminary training UCLA has several disadvantages. It is located fifteen miles from the center of Los Angeles and offers few courses at night or during the summer. For this purpose the University of Southern California (USC) or Los Angeles State College may be preferable. USC has about twenty courses in anthropology, is centrally located, and offers courses at night and during the summer sessions. However, it costs $20 a unit. Los Angeles State has only ten courses but is centrally located and tuition free. Both of these schools have good area ethnology studies and friendly, capable instructors.

Interested persons can obtain more specific information by securing the catalogs or writing David Winter or Claude Stipe, whose addresses may be found in earlier issues of Practical Anthropology.

--David K. Winter

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